



PRESERVING EARLY CHILDHOOD CONFERENCE

Implementing Play-Based Learning

Dr. Rachel White, Ph.D.

March 2019



FOR CHILDREN,
PLAY IS SERIOUS
LEARNING. PLAY IS
REALLY **THE WORK
OF CHILDHOOD.**

-Fred Rogers

Why not call play the work of
teachers as well?

VIVIAN PALEY, 2004

Remember, playful learning is child-directed — but adults contribute by...



OBSERVING & ASSESSING

What does the child know? What do they need now? Where are they going?



PROVIDING MATERIALS & SCAFFOLDING

Set up spaces and activities.
Help children to use them.



ASKING & INTERACTING

Ask open-ended questions,
provide suggestions, co-play

Play Roles

ONLOOKER

Observe, comment occasionally. Do not disrupt. Can help you to understand child's play habits & know when to intervene.

STAGE MANAGER

Help children set the stage for play. Might propose extensions to play, but children are free to follow or ignore suggestions.

CO-PLAYER

Join in the play in a supporting role. Make suggestions or extend play. Model skills.

PLAY LEADER

Use sparingly. Guide play from within. Helpful for short periods when child is having trouble starting or maintaining play.

A photograph of a large iceberg floating in the ocean. The visible tip of the iceberg is on the right side of the frame, while a much larger, submerged mass of ice extends to the left and into the background. The water is a deep blue, and the sky is a pale, hazy blue. The overall image has a soft, slightly desaturated aesthetic.

But, much of a teacher's work happens behind the scenes

OBSERVING, ASSESSING, DOCUMENTING, REFLECTING, PLANNING, PREPPING SPACES AND PROPS...

Assessing play using PRoPELS

Leong & Bodrova, 2015

PLAN

Thinking about play before starting

ROLES

Consider the actions, language, emotions needed to play a role

PROPS

Objects used in play

EXTENDED TIME FRAME

Play can last for hours, or extend over days

LANGUAGE

Children's language can help them coordinate play, negotiate and act out a role

SCENARIO

Scripts and interactions involved in enacting play

Five Stages in a Child's Make-Believe Play

	1. First Scripts	2. Roles in Action	3. Roles with Rules and Beginning Scenarios	4. Mature Roles, Planned Scenarios, and Symbolic Props	5. Dramatization, Multiple Themes, Multiple Roles, and Director's Play
Plan	Does not plan during play.	Does not plan during play.	Plans roles; actions are named prior to play.	Plans each scenario in advance.	Plans elaborate themes, scenarios, and complex roles. Spends more time planning than acting out the scenario.
Roles	Does not have roles.	Acts first and then decides on roles. No rules are revealed.	Has roles with rules that can be violated.	Has complex, multiple roles.	Can play more than one role at a time. Roles have social relationships.
Props	Plays with objects as objects.	Plays with objects as props. Actions with a prop result in a role.	Needs a prop for the role.	Chooses symbolic and pretend props.	Can pretend rather than actually have a prop. Does not need a prop to stay in the role. Objects can have roles.
Extended time frame	Explores objects, but not play scenarios.	Creates scenarios that last a few minutes.	Creates scenarios that last 10–15 minutes.	Creates scenarios that last 60 minutes or longer. With support, can create scenarios that last over several days.	Creates scenarios that last all day and over several days. Play can be interrupted and restarted.
Language	Uses little language.	Uses language to describe actions.	Uses language to describe roles and actions.	Uses language to describe roles and actions. Uses role speech.	Uses language to delineate the scenario, roles, and action. Book language is incorporated into role speech.
Scenario	Does not create a scenario. Can copy what the teacher does and says or will follow the teacher's directions if script is simple and repetitive.	Creates a scenario that is stereotypical, with limited behaviors. Can incorporate modeled roles and actions into play, with support.	Plays familiar scripts fully. Accepts new script ideas.	Plays a series of coordinated scenarios that change in response to previous ones or the desires of players. Describes unfolding scenario, roles, and actions.	Plays a series of coordinated scenarios that change in response to previous ones or the desires of players. Uses themes from stories and literature.

Elena Bodrova (2012) Assessing and scaffolding make-believe play. *Young Children*. Retrieved from: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/292513144>



THANK YOU!

Remaining questions?

REWHITE@HAMILTON.EDU



My recommendation for more information on this topic: